

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 297926

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ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY EA;AR DAY:TH

APPROVED BY P:JJSISCO

S/S - CABORG

NEA - MR. DUBS

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 297926

EXDIS

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, EG, SY, SA, LE

SUBJECT: LEBANON

REF: BEIRUT 15263, BEIRUT 15140, CAIRO 12739

FOR ATHERTON FROM SISCO

1. WITH RESPECT TO MAC GODLEY'S RECOMMENDATION THAT YOU RAISE IN CAIRO THE MATTER OF SYRIAN ROLE IN LEBANON, WE HAVE SOME RESERVATIONS. TO BEGIN WITH, SYRIAN ROLE, WHILE IT HAS CERTAINLY CONSTRUCTIVE ASPECT, SEEMS TO US TO BE AMBIGUOUS, PARTICULARLY OVER LONGER TERM. SECONDLY, EGYPTIAN HARPING ON NON-INTERVENTION THEME IS PROBABLY IN PART FUNCTION OF POST-SINAI II FEUD WITH SYRIA AND PARTLY EXPRESSION OF GENUINE EGYPTIAN CONCERN THAT SYRIAN AND ISRAELI INTERVENTION WOULD PUT CAIRO IN IMPOSSIBLE SITUATION WITH RESPECT TO ITS CONFLICTING RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARD SINAI II ON ONE HAND AND ITS POSITION IN ARAB WORLD ON THE OTHER. FOR BOTH REASONS, CONFIDENTIAL

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WE DOUBT THERE IS MUCH TO BE GAINED BY URGING EGYPTIANS

TO STAY AWAY FROM THIS THEME. AT SAME TIME, WE DO AGREE IT WOULD BE REGRETTABLE IF EGYPTIANS SOUGHT ACTIVELY TO THWART SYRIAN EFFORTS TO BRING END TO FIGHTING, WHICH WE ARE INCLINED TO CREDIT. SINCE YOU ARE IN THE AREA,

HOWEVER, AND WILL BE TALKING WITH OUR AMBASSADORS ON THE SPOT, WE LEAVE THIS ULTIMATELY UP TO YOU. PRESUMABLY YOU WOULD WANT TO RAISE THE LEBANESE SITUATION IN ANY CASE WITH THE EGYPTIANS IN A GENERAL WAY, AND COULD MAKE THE POINT BY BALANCED APPRAISAL OF SYRIAN ROLE.

2. WE ARE LOOKING INTO REPORTS THAT ISRAELI BROADCAST REFERRED TO ISRAELI PLANS FOR EVACUATING JEWISH COMMUNITY FROM BEIRUT. WE RECALL MAC GODLEY'S EARLIER WARNINGS THAT ISRAELI AGITATION ABOUT JEWISH COMMUNITY IN BEIRUT COULD IN THE END BE HARMFUL TO LATTER, AND THIS WOULD SEEM CASE IN POINT IF WE FIND REPORT TO BE CORRECT. WE WILL KEEP YOU INFORMED. AS OF NOW, GIVEN TEL AVIV'S 7970, IT APPEARS REPORT AT LEAST DID NOT REFLECT OFFICIAL ISRAELI STATEMENT.

3. CAIRO 12739 WAS RECEIVED AFTER FOREGOING WAS DRAFTED. AS WILL BE APPARENT, WE ARE IN GENERAL AGREEMENT WITH THRUST OF CAIRO'S ANALYSIS. INGERSOLL

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